

EXOTIC AND RARE MIGRANT BUTTERFLIES RECORDED ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT DURING 1995

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¹Roundstone, 2 School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight.

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THE SUMMER OF 1995 was the warmest and driest on the Isle of Wight since 1989. The winds were generally from the north-east and this aided a large migration of the Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa* (L.) to the east coast of Great Britain. It was also the warmest October since records began and there was a considerable migration of the Monarch butterfly *Danaus plexippus* (L.) along the south coast with five records for the Isle of Wight.

There were also several reports of sightings of three species of exotic butterfly on the island during this hot summer and these examples were most likely escapes from *Butterfly World* at Wootton. Apparently the nets had become torn which resulted in a number of escapes throughout the year. We have been in touch with the manageress and advised her that these escapes should be avoided. She intends to replace the torn nets when funds become available.

We now give details of six species of butterfly in two parts – genuine migrants and exotic species which were probably escapes.

Genuine migrants

Swallowtail *Papilio machaon gorganus* (Fruhstorfer)

An example of this species was seen by Dr D. Biggs at Lukely Stream, Carisbrooke on 4 August. This was a good sighting and the recorder is familiar with this species from abroad.

Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa* (L.)

21 August, Bonchurch, near pond (Mrs Saul).

26 August, Hunts Road, Ventnor, on *Buddleia* (Mr & Mrs Ellis).

31 August, in a private garden at Quarr Abbey, Ryde (Mrs Hudson).

Monarch *Danaus plexippus* (L.)

8 October, in a private garden on a beautiful day (Miss K. Hack).

8 October, Mr D.A. Britton observed this butterfly for one and a half hours on a yellow flowering *Buddleia* at Luccombe.

9 October, Tennyson Down, Freshwater at 17.00hrs (Mr Woodread).

9 October, coming off the sea chased by a Painted Lady *Cynthia cardui* (L.). Observed by Mrs J. Cheverton at Shanklin.

10 October, Tennyson Monument, Tennyson Down (Mr B. Ransom).

Exotic species

Common Leopard *Phalantha phalantha* (Drury)

This is an Afrotropical species covering regions such as the Malagasy Republic, Seychelles, Cameros, Mascarene Islands and Australia.

An example captured at Spinfish, Freshwater on 9 June (S.A. Knill-Jones), which also happened to be the hottest day of the month. It was exhibited at the annual exhibition of the British Entomological & Natural History Society on 28 October 1995.

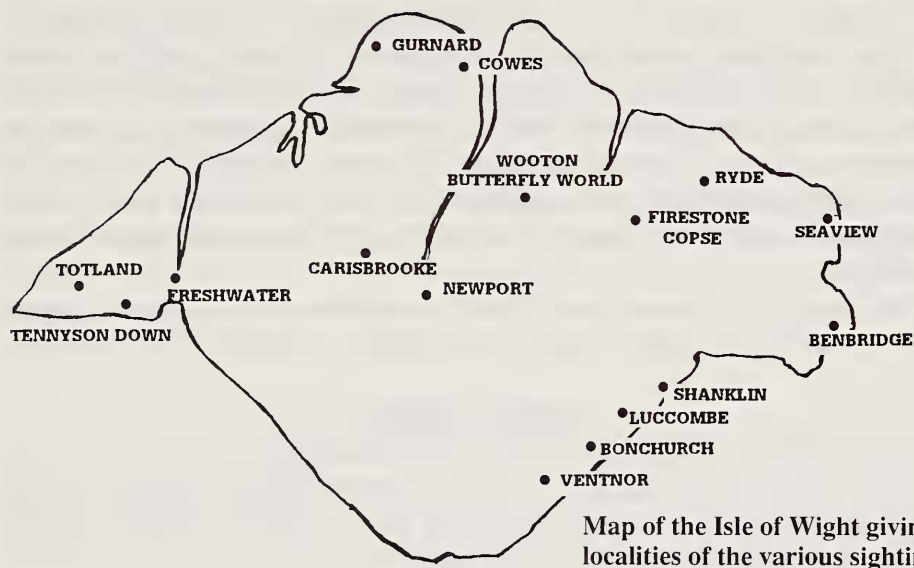
12 July, Cat Copse, Gurnard. Photographed by Mr J. Caws.

12 August, Love Lane, Bembridge (Mr Skinner).

28 August, Seaview (Mr Choong).

Black Swallowtail *Papilio demetrius* (L.)

This is an Asian butterfly occurring in Japan, China and Korea. It was observed by Mr W. Downer at Rew Street, Gurnard on 9 August.



Map of the Isle of Wight giving localities of the various sightings.

Heliconius charitonius (L.)

This butterfly occurs in the rain forests of South America, southern USA and the West Indies.

1 June, Firestone Copse. Photographed by Mr N. Sival.

24 June, Appley, Ryde (Miss J. Philips).

4 August, Cowes (Mr W. Downer).

4 August, Gurnard (Mr W. Downer).

12 August, Bembridge, on *Buddleia*. Two observed by Mr Skinner.

12 August, Stevensons Road, Cowes (Mr K. Venables).

26 August, Park Road, Cowes. Two observed by Mr Harmar.

28 August, Seagrove Road, Seaview. Two observed by Mr Choong.

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